

BRENTWOOD Gazette

Wednesday October 14, 2009

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Pictures taken this week

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THERE'S AS MANY TRAVELLERS AS US



GYPSY SITES: Horsenanside



Goatswood Lane



Church Road



Goatswood Lane



Goatswood Lane

Anger at 'double standards' in village besieged by 26 gypsy sites

Exclusive by Rhiannon Evans
editorial@gazettenews.co.uk

AS many travellers now live in Navestock as permanent residents.

Besieged parish councillors believe the figure could be even higher as illegal gypsy sites lie behind impregnable high walls and barbed wire.

The latest best estimate by councillors reveals there are 26 sites in

the parish, housing around 112 caravans or mobile homes. It is impossible to tell how many people live in each caravan.

This compares to 140 households and a permanent population of 350.

The situation and bad feeling has now become so out-of-hand that one terrified resident called Brentwood Borough Council enforcement officers to a field in Goatswood Lane when they saw

what they believed was a tractor moving hardcore onto the land. In fact, the farmer was simply transporting fertiliser to a field.

Legal

Some of the sites within Navestock are legal and others geographically fall a number of metres outside Brentwood council's boundaries into Havering and Epping borders.

But vice-chair of Navestock Parish

Council Adrian Enkel said the situation is reaching fever pitch in the parish.

"I think a lot of people are getting upset about the double standards," he said.

"There's huge resentment because the gypsies are above the rules everyone else has to live by."

"I don't think people are frightened - just really angry." Chairman Jan Savill agreed, adding: "If you want to integrate

people into a community, the last thing you do is make it appear one side is special or more worthwhile - it causes resentment."

"We do have some integrated gypsies in the village, but we have a problem with the other people who appear to be above the planning laws and regulations."

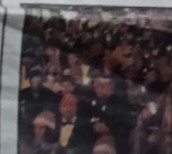
Incidents where homeowners have been told to remove summer houses and trampolines by coun-

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High Street traders demand damages

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Briefing

Parked cars protect our students, claims head



ANGLO European headmaster David Barr claims the cars that line Fryerning Lane actually slow passing traffic, which would otherwise pose a major danger to pupils.

Full story p13

Cottagers warned over snakes

RESIDENTS are being warned to be careful where they tread in overgrown grassland, as they could be in for a rude awakening.

Full story p16

African Queen is on a mission

A SELFLESS grandmother of seven will be heading to the Gambia for the 13th time next month.

Full story p17

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- **BRENTWOOD:** Seedy sex sites used by doggers
- **BRENTWOOD:** Blaze next to the old Varley...
- **Food & Drink Awards 2009: THE WINNERS**

Next week

In go! we talk to the people who've brought Roald Dahl's children's classic *Fantastic Mr Fox* to the big screen



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Passengers' Sunday bus service joy

ISOLATED residents have finally been given the Sunday bus service they campaigned for, more than four years after their fight began.

The Hutton Circular - from Brentwood rail station via Shenfield station, Running Waters and Hanging Hill Lane - is now on trial for six months.

It will provide Eastham estate residents, who would have no other means of public transport on those days other than taxis, a much-needed service to Brentwood High Street.

Wendy Way, who joined the Brentwood Bus and Rail Users Association to fight for the Sunday service, said: "I am absolutely ecstatic."

David Kendall, secretary of the association, said "When I got elected as the county councillor for Brentwood South in June, my first act was to call on the cabinet member and the transport department to support this scheme. I am delighted."



ON THE BUSES: Cllr David Kendall and Wendy Way celebrate the new Sunday bus service with other campaigners and a bottle of champagne

Gipsy numbers match residents

From page 1

cil officers on roads where there are illegal gipsy sites have done little to remedy bad feeling.

Mr Enkel has criticised Brentwood Borough Council's approach in granting some sites planning permission and its plans to install 15 Government-demanded sites around the borough, claiming it creates a snowball effect as subsequent applications are difficult to turn down.

Two of the authority's five proposed sites are within Havestock, but Mr Enkel says the council should consider a different course which would keep travellers in once place.

"Brentwood council needs to sit back, look at the situation and compulsory purchase some land somewhere for all the travellers to go to instead," he said.

Commenting on the recent misunderstanding on Gostwood Lane council leader Cllr Louise McKinlay said: "The council treats complainants in planning enforcement cases very seriously and will send out an officer to investigate if it is appropriate."

Boy, 14, in court for attack on fellow pupil

Teen pays victim compensation and has to leave the school

Rhiannon Evans

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A 14-YEAR-OLD boy was in court this week on an assault charge after attacking a fellow pupil on school grounds.

The child - who we cannot be named for legal reasons - was originally charged with wounding or inflicting grievous bodily harm following the attack, which took place at the school on March 31 this year. He had pleaded not guilty.

However, before the three-day hearing was due to start at Basildon Youth Court on Wednesday last week, the

boy pleaded guilty to a significantly reduced charge of a section four public order offence.

As the boy was tried in a youth court, we cannot even identify the Brentwood borough school which he attended when the assault took place.

Offence

The head teacher at the school told the Gazette: "I do not know the offence or verdict relating to the youth who has been convicted, but he no longer attends this school and therefore the issue is closed so far as we are concerned."

"I can state very clearly that when pupils misbehave at school, we take every case seriously and investigate thoroughly."

"Whenever a pupil has or appears to have broken the law we contact our police liaison officer and between us we take the most effective actions that we can to prevent the person repeating the misbehaviour, to protect other pupils and to prevent pupils thinking they can get away with things."

"I have always taken firm, fair and fast action with anybody who misbehaves - I honestly believe it is a win-win situation for everybody."

"By taking firm but fair action as

fast as is possible the pupil misbehaving benefits because it usually stops him or her misbehaving and it protects other pupils."

"It also makes sure that pupils who would misbehave are far less likely to misbehave because they know the consequences of poor behaviour."

The boy received a three-month referral order and was ordered to pay his victim £400 in compensation.

As part of a referral order the boy is required to attend a youth offender panel made up of two volunteers and an adviser, and agree a three-month contract to address the causes of the offending behaviour.

Views: What do you think the true meaning of Christmas is?

Gazette comment

LIGHTING up anywhere during the war years would have been out of the question - unless you wanted a visit from a Stubb Luftwaffe bomb.

And so it seems somehow prophetically ironic that the council's 1940s-themed Lighting Up Brentwood event should be without its candlelit procession.

There will still be the normal press of the button but the hundreds of candles that should normally be seen moving down the street have been extinguished.

This year's festive blackout has come about following a positively unholy row between Brentwood council and 21 members of Churches Together, which help organise the procession.

Churches say they need a stage. Council says there's no money. Next year, perhaps.

Once upon a time people gathered at Christmas to remember The Message.

And whether you are Christian or not, that one is pretty universal.

It certainly is not about arguing over costs. Christmas should transcend money.

It is not about unwrapping new PlayStation and gorging on overcooked turkey.

Far from the High Street shopping queues and the stress and headaches. Far from the madding crowd.

Further still from rows over who should hold what at an annual Christmas celebration.

■ AH YES - the traveller, the romance, the open road, the freedom.

But many are asking, how is that relevant to gipsy lives when they reside in permanent hardstanding mobile homes?

And why they ask, more importantly do travellers build them without permission?

We don't, so why do they?

The argument from travellers: "We want to be treated like everyone else," starts to grate when the law is flouted so blatantly. In essence, they stick two fingers up at councils, the courts, and their neighbours.

But this is missing the point. Gipsies have the same aspirations for their children and they have non-gipsy neighbours who they call friends.

And that is true. What the gipsies refuse to accept is their lawlessness is an affront to many.

Maybe they want anarchy. The rest of us just want them to play by the rules.

IT SEEMS there may be far less religious emphasis to this year's Lighting Up Brentwood after we discovered Churches Together had pulled out of the festive event. We asked residents and shoppers in Brentwood town centre what they thought the true meaning of Christmas was.

Jamie James, 23, of Brentwood, said: "Christmas is for my daughter these days. It's about celebration. I just want to see a smile on her face."

June Jackson, 67, of Shenfield, said: "It is about the birth of Christ. It is nice to have presents but really it is a family and religious time."

Churches pull out of lighting up event - p5

Chris Polden, 58, of Brentwood, said: "Christmas should be about families. People making a point of seeing each other, getting together and putting aside differences."

Lisa Murray, 56, of Brentwood, thinks children are spoilt nowadays and added: "I think Christmas has lost its meaning because all people worry about is shopping and spending money."

Kenneth Franklin, 74, of Rainham, said: "I think it is just a commercial fraud. The meaning has been completely lost."